794 The ancestors are worshipped in various places: at the doors and
769 thresholds of houses, at the cemetery, and at stone altars placed at
778 the intersections of lanes and in public squares. These positive cults, which are aimed at the acquisition of beneficial forces, have as a counterpart, cults in which the villagers rid themselves of all their unlucky and infectious elements; these take place, in particular, at the corssroads, dangu, which are placed under the guardianship of the earth Soba spirits.

It would be impossible to treat all of the cults of the Bambara villages. Among these, three have caught our attention; they concern the dasiri, the dangu, and the ancestral altar stones.

A. The dasiri

794 The word dasiri (literally, which binds the mouth) designates the
776 invisible spirit, Faro's representative entrusted with watching over
778 /138/ the village, as well as the seat of this spirit and, sometimes too, the animal which accompanies it or symbolizes it.

The spirit haunts a rock, a thicket, or a tree situated near the village; the approaches to this spot are reserved for the elder in charge of the ritual (1).

1. In Massala and Soroba it is a baobab tree; in Sama, a tamarind tree, etc. See the observations on the dasiri collected by Ch. Monteil, Monographie de Djenné /Monograph of Djenne/, pp. 137-138; L. Tauxier. La Religion Bambara, pp. 195-208.

[824]

[187 361] Generally the place is pointed out by the geomancer at the time the village is founded, or else determined by an event which occurred at that time. It is after this operation that the buildings are erected to the west of the chosen spot.

If the dasiri is a tree, no one may burn or cut its branches. In [822] many cases it cannot be approached by anyone dressed in black or indigo, colors which represent obscurity. No Peul may sit in its [563] shade (2). Any infraction of these taboos brings about the death of

2. The reasons for the taboo concerning the Peul have not yet been ascertained.

476 461 567 The patriarchal community draws its subsistence from this agricultural exploitation, and as a result, a kind of work organization has developed. Patriarchal communities or important families have agricultural land in various regions and these tracts are often far apart. Some members of the community or a group of slaves are therefore settled in each domain, sometimes on a permanent basis, sometimes for the period of clearing and cultivating the soil, sometimes for the period of harvest. [361]

Theoretically, every member of the community and every slave must work for the community from dawn to around noon every day during the farming season. Two days, however, Monday and Thursday, are given to these persons for work in their own fields. Anyone who cannot or will not work has the right to provide a replacement from among his dependents.

There are, of course, many exceptions to these rules. In the first place, everyone works according to his position. Among the poor, the master works as hard as the slave, if not harder; among people in comfortable circumstances, the master merely controls and directs the work, sometimes reserving a particular job for himself. In important communities, field work [189] is almost exclusively the duty of the slaves, under the surveillance of their leaders and following the orders of the fa, who either supervises it himself or has a member of his entourage do so.

583 589 768 Conjugal usufruct. When she marries, a woman is given in usufruct in exchange for the bride price. This usufruct is community property exactly like the things used for the bride price.

When a fa dies, the disposal of the conjugal usufruct included in the estate is a serious matter. Since the conjugal usufruct is of the same duration as the life of the woman, the death of the husband has no legal effect on the situation of his spouse. Since it is understood, however, that the widow has no sexual obligations to her husband's heirs, the usufruct is reduced in that respect. Such is the lot of widows when the heirs decide to keep them without marrying them and the women elect to remain.

[8] The Bougouni circle is divided as follows:

162
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Cantons	No. of Villages	Population	Observations
Bambeledougou	13	1,785	Bambara
Banimonatie	47	10,829	F. B and Bambara
Bilatouma	5	1,771	Foulah-Bambara
Danou	8	3,413	Bambara
Debelendoudou	11	2,053	—
Dialakadougou	6	1,696	—
Diban	7	2,398	—
Domba	18	2,510	—
Falani-Auola	16	5,086	—
Gouantiedougou	41	9,771	—
Keikero	8	1,705	—
Kokoun	16	3,157	—
Kola	13	2,122	—
Kouroulamini	30	8,653	—
Niene	20	12,525	Senoufo
Siankadougou	16	2,288	Bambara
Sibirila	29	9,652	—
Siondougou	28	3,697	
Tiemala	54	16,492	Foulah-Bambara
Tiendougou	69	16,624	—
Tinkatougou	16	3,342	Bambara
Tyan	16	3,369	—
Yiridougou	13	3,263	—
Zana	8	2,939	—
Yorobadougou Niamala	15	2,886	—
Keleyadougou Nienendougou Nafanandougou Fulala	Census in progress		

● 8 M 361 ●

Ségou

Chefferie of Somonos....		28 villages	8,440 hectares		
" " Bolomissé...	2,600km^2		27,550	"	Bambara Markas
" " Dokono...	270 "	98 "	11,083	"	" "
" " M'Pebala .	4,000 "	138 "	27,540	"	Bambara
" " Bibelambés.	500 "	9 "	1,846	"	Peul + some Bambara
" " Koulala....	400 "	18 "	4,545	"	Bambara
" " Sana	400 "	16 "	6,054	"	Markas Bambara
" " the Thiandis Peul	3,200 "	37 "	5,660	"	Peul
" " M Pérédiola .	1,250 "	20 "	5,384	"	Bambara
" " Farako	2,000 "	47 "	14,092	"	Bambara Markas Peul
" " Malaké Markas	100 "	4 "	2,310	"	Markas
" " Sansanding .	400 "	6 "			Bambara
" " Bambougou .	900 "	99 "	33,504	"	Bambara and Peul
" " Bebe	400 "	28 "	4,576	"	Bambara
" " Kalaké Bambara	700 "	13 "	2,911	"	"
" " Dioforongo .	1,200 "	72 "	12,935	"	Peul, Bambara

Nioro

Chefferie of the canton of Kala	1,900 km^2	5,400 hectares		Bambara
" Markabougou	3,200 "	2,782	"	"
" Sokolo	4,200 "	6,126	"	Bambara Markas
" Miempiéna	1,000 "	3,332	"	Bambara
" Segala	3,200 "	1,773	"	"
" Mossi of the Sahel .		1,254	"	Mossi

3e Paques--10A S-4 (no date) 1954 FA8 Bambara FA8 Mossi FA28

304 The Bambara decorate their faces and bodies with numerous
773 scarifications, with the aim of conferring on the wearer the qualities symbolized by the scars. By their influence on the character and temperament of an individual, they help him to come up to the ideal man. These marks are associated with the myth of the origin of agriculture They are eight small scars: two vertical ones at the root of the nose, three under each eye. They imitate the facial marks of the mythical being, half man, half animal, who taught men how to cultivate the soil. (1)

1. S. de Ganay, "On a form of cicatrisation among the Bambara," Man.

f. Arrangement of the Settlements

361 The Bambara village follows rules of development which allow a stranger to recognize the disposition of the huts immediately and to single out a chief's house, that of a blacksmith, or that of any other member of the society. In fact, the village is built to the north or east of the protective tree. To the south of the village, [778] is the sacred wood, dwelling place of the chief of the spirits, where the religious ceremonies and the initiation rites take place. As more families come to live in the village, they build their huts around that of the chief, except to the east, for the chief must see the sun rise. The oldest son of the chief, his eventual successor, will have his own plot near his father's. The house of the Komo is situated outside of the village, to the south or west, hidden in a wood or a thicket. At the edge of the village is a round cabin, the house of the Nyama, in the middle is a square cabin with painted walls, house of the Gna (see the chapter on religion). In the center of the village, a cleared place around a doubalé serves for public meetings; the elders hold their councils under the branches of the doubalé.

764 [100] Finally, the cemetery of the free men is found outside the
554 village, to the west; that of captives and people of caste is to the south of the free men's cemetery.

326 Every village has its blacksmith, for he is life, and the vil-
000 lage could not subsist without him. Before the French conquest,

Before the French conquest,

712 Bambara villages were fortified. They were protected by a triple enclosure of clay blocks following a line of beams that sheltered the sentinels. The first wall enclosed the village and the surrounding gardens, the second circled the interior of the village, and the third surrounded the chief's houses. These walls could be as high as five meters and as wide as two meters at the base. They had a ditch in front of them and were re-inforced by steps. Considerable ruins of these fortifications may still be seen in the Kourolamini at Ténintu (Bougouni circle).

342 House construction. (1) Throughout the Sudan, house construction is carried out during the dry season. The same is true for repairs, except for the most urgent caused by damage from rains, streaming waters, violent winds, or by the ravages of termites.

1. Information, in part, given by Moussa Traoré, from the village of Gouani (Diemandougou canton), Bamako circle.

342 361 787 778 Choice of the site. The choice is often made near a temporary or permanent watercourse where wells may be sunk. A soothsayer or Marabout is next consulted, who reveals the existence of a spirit whose favorite place is the cailcedra; if the spirit is benevolent, the installation is authorized, and the sacred tree becomes the altar of the collectivity. It is bathed with periodic sacrifices.

342 Types of habitation. 1. The round hut with thatched roof (tuba bo); 2 the square or rectangular hut (bili) with flat roof.

Round hut. The man drives a stake to which he attaches a cord 1.50 meters long at the most, which is also tied to the head of a hoe. The man circles the stake and traces a circumference that [401] will be the scheme of the house. No foundation is laid. A series of double pickets (kassassin) is set up around the circumference. A bamboo strip is passed in and out between the double stakes, and this basketwork is raised from the ground up to a height of about two meters.

When the cylinder forming the walls of the base is finished, a door is cut, facing south, 25 centimeters from the ground and 1.50 meters high. One then plasters with banco, that is, with earth dug not far from the hut by the young people and made into a paste with a mixture of fonio straw, cow dung, and water drawn by the women. The roof is constructed on the ground. A circumference equal to that

343 which are dried. Then it is reassembled without sealing the pieces
251 together, and as the level of the provisions goes down, the unnecessary sections are taken off. The kitchens are situated to the west of the rooms.

Arrangement of the huts in a concession. The chief's hut is
342 always to the east, for he must see the sun rise. His hut is often
361 quadrangular and has several rooms. The women's huts are generally round; each has its kitchen situated to the west and closed by a separate lock. Private shower rooms are reserved for husbands and
[514] wives. Privy cabinets with two holes, one for urine and one for stool, are stopped up and condemned when they are full.

312 Finally, the well is sunk in the middle of the court or else in the immediate proximity of the concession. Water is drawn directly with a calabash fixed to a long rope.

342 Sometimes individual huts are constructed on piles for protection against mosquitoes at night; the only opening is a trap door in the floor by which the hut is entered.

g. Tombs

764 An old custom had the family heads buried in their huts. The Fama were buried in the courts of their fortified palaces, to the northwest. Babies were buried near their mothers' huts, for their return was awaited. At the present time the Bambara are buried in cemeteries following Moslem or animist custom.

[767] [103] The brotherhood priests dig the graves; tombs may be individual or collective. Monteil (Les Bambara du Ségou et du Kaarta [The Bambara of Ségou and Kaarta]) describes a chief's tomb: the vault has the form of a parallelepiped; the lower base is one meter wide and two long, the upper base three wide and two long, and a vertical partition of 1.50 meters forms a right angle with the bases.

In Ouassoulou the custom was to dig a common tomb of several chambers for the whole family. A square entrance about two meters high and two wide led into a narrow corridor that opened on a first chamber reserved for children; another corridor connected the first chamber with a second, larger one reserved for women and for adult males; from this a third corridor led to a last chamber, a smaller one for heads of the family. An oil lamp was placed at the